

Attorney Docket No. 2002/US/2

**REMARKS**

In the aforementioned Office communication, claims 1-4 were rejected by the examiner under Section 102 as being fully anticipated by the patent to Paterson et al. US 5,803,437 while claim 5 was rejected under Section 103 as being unpatentable over Rice US 4,261,614 in view of Paterson et al. In the rejection of claim 5, the examiner noted the Rice patent disclosed a manually telescoping camper but not a winch as set forth in claim 1 even though it is felt the examiner inadvertently omitted the term "not". He concluded it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide Rice with a winch as taught by Paterson et al. so that the lifting of the telescoping portion 17 may be extended and lowered automatically and electronically without tiring the user.

While the Paterson patent is concerned with a winch having limit switches for limiting the amount of cable extended from or wrapped onto a spool carried by the winch, the operation of the winch is quite distinct from the present invention. In fact, a winch of the type disclosed in the Paterson et al. reference would not function reliably and suitably in the environment for which applicant's winch assembly has been designed.

More specifically, the winch of the present invention has been designed for use in raising and lowering a camper trailer where it is evident the trailer, when being towed, is bounced, jostled, and vibrated excessively so that the components of the winch need to be such as to not vary the winch's operation regardless of the amount of vibration the winch receives.

In the Paterson winch, it will be appreciated by reference to column 4, line 65 through column 5, line 5 that the limit switches are mounted in adjustable slots in the

Attorney Docket No. 2002/US/2

base of the housing so they can be repositioned by sliding the switch in the slot as a method for adjusting the limits of operation of the winch. Such a system may be suitable for use in lifting medium weight fixed articles such as basketball backstops or other gymnasium equipment such as noted in column 1, lines 5-9, but certainly would not be acceptable for use on trailers that are continuously vibrated. The continuous vibration would likely loosen and change the position of the limit switches thereby diminishing the reliability of the winch.

In the present invention, the limit switches are fixed in position and the limits of the winch are adjustable by varying the width of the trigger mechanism. The trigger mechanism is a plate of a predetermined fixed width but adjustable threaded bolts are provided off opposite faces for engagement with the fixed limit switches so that by threadedly adjusting the bolts relative to the plate the relative thickness of the plate can be changed on either face. In this manner, the limits of movement of the winch in either direction are independently adjustable and in a reliable manner so that the system is suitable for use in vibrational environments such as found on travel trailers.

To more specifically point out the distinctions between the prior art reference to Paterson et al. and the present invention, independent claim 1 has been amended to state the trigger mechanism has a width that is adjustable along the length of the rod on which the trigger mechanism is mounted and the winch includes at least one limit switch that is mounted on the chassis for the winch at a fixed location. This of course is not shown or suggested in the prior art patent to Paterson et al. and defines a winch assembly which is felt to be more desirable in vibratory environments than one of the type described in the Paterson et al. reference. Claim 2 references two limit switches

Attorney Docket No. 2002/US/2

mounted at fixed locations and states the trigger comprises a plate having a first adjustable member on one face and a second adjustable member on an opposite face. This of course references the bolts that are threadedly mounted on the plate for achieving the advantages mentioned above.

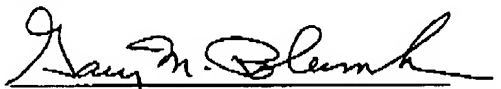
Inasmuch as claim 1 is the only independent claim in the application with the remaining claims being dependent thereon and claim 1 is felt to be patentably distinct from the prior art, it is felt all the claims in the application are patentably distinct from the prior art.

The specification has been amended on page 6 to provide antecedent basis for use of the term "width" even though this should not be considered new matter as it is merely further identifying a feature of the invention as illustrated in the original drawings and described in the original specification.

Inasmuch as there have been no other rejections or objections to the application, it is felt the application is now in condition for allowance and such action is courteously requested.

Dated this 7<sup>th</sup> day of June 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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GMP/dtc